

NEGRO EXODUS TO THIS CITY IS FINISHED

MANY WHO CAME HAVE GONE
BACK.

EXPERIMENT IS A FAILURE

Homesickness and Other Factors Keep
Them in the South Now—No
Problem Here.

They have gone back home—the negroes of the South who, about a year ago, started what seemed to be the beginning of an exodus to the Northland. As it happened in Rochester, so, too, it happened in other Northern cities. The situation was regarded as an approaching problem until the problem was solved automatically, so to speak, before it reached a full growth.

About a year ago, negro men and women began to arrive here from Dixie. They had heard of high wages paid to workers in the North. Quite a number of them picked Rochester as their field of endeavor in which to become prosperous. Several factors altered the situation. One of the strong factors was homesickness. The negro men found it difficult to get work and the employment bureau found it difficult to get work for them. Munition plants and other industries were reluctant about employing them. As a general rule the Northern employer and the Southern negro, once they had reached an agreement and the worker entered on his duties, discovered that they did not understand each other very well. The employer saw reasons for leaving the negro was lazy and inefficient. The negro saw reasons for leaving the employer was unfriendly. The attitude of the white man was too cold—too much like the climate.

Felt Strange Here.

The negro felt strange in the presence of an employer who was very unbusinesslike. He was accustomed, when he worked in the South, whether in a factory or as a railroad section man or a steamboat roustabout, to a gruffness on the part of the white boss. While the Northern boss did not treat him, but treated him with un-

continued, "there is something else that tends to prevent the migration of negroes. Influential whites of the South are persuading the conservative negroes to influence the blacks to remain in the South, promising them a square deal in all things. The sensible white people do not want to lose the negroes, who are useful to them in industry and in other ways. They have come to realize how much they really need the colored people."

Mr. Jones said the Y. W. C. A.'s club for colored girls is an excellent thing. Most of the girls in the club are Southern negroes. The club offers them an opportunity to get acquainted with their own kind and helps to prevent homesickness. They are being educated, he said, in various useful work as well as mentally. "We are trying to train them in our ways," he said, meaning the ways of the prosperous Northern negroes. "Eventually they will return to the Southland and they are going to carry back with them the lessons they have learned here. It is a splendid work."

"This is not our greatest trouble, however. They come up on the Louisville and Nashville railroad from Mississippi, Texas, Florida and Alabama on their way to the Northwest, but when they reach Cincinnati they are sidetracked. Labor agents get hold of them, get them jobs and they don't go any farther."

Much Work in South.

Another reason the exodus from the South has stopped, according to Mr. Jones, is that the cotton and tobacco industries of the South are in a flourishing condition and there is plenty of work for the negroes in their homeland. Some of the colored men who came to Rochester and worked in munition plants, moved to Detroit when the plants here closed.

"In addition to the fact that a majority of the Northern cities do not care to carry the race problem," he

emotional and just decided. Neither abusing him nor laughing at him, his surroundings made him feel some. He found that, as a general rule, he was not put to work with gang of negroes. Where he did work there was no camaraderie. His white fellow employees did not join him in his jests and pastimes.

His negro acquaintances were Northerners, too. To him they were "Yankee Coons." The Southern negro was uneducated. The Rochester negro had come under the education law. Their interests were different. The Southern negro still found music in the mouth organ and the banjo and pleasure in clog dances. The Northern negro had a piano in his home and perhaps his son or daughter played the violin, and he and his family were well dressed—high toned and "stuck up" from the standpoint of his Southern compatriot.

Mrs. Ann A. Husband, head of the women's department in the Employment bureau, says the effort to solve the servant problem by bringing Southern negroes to Rochester was a flat failure. The colored girls of the South had a notion that, instead of \$4 or \$5 a week, the wages received in their home towns, they could earn \$14 or \$15 a week as domestics in the North. They were disappointed.

"Out of fifty of these girls," said Mrs. Husband, "only two or three were found to be good servants by Northern standards, and only one remained in her position any length of time. She, too, finally left. Some of them said they did not like the Northern white women. They said they and their mistresses did not understand one another."

Not Eager for Them.

Rev. E. D. W. Jones, pastor of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion church, and other colored ministers interested in the welfare of their race have been active in encouraging Southern negroes to establish themselves in useful and profitable occupations. Mr. Jones told a Post Express reporter that the leaders of the race in the North did not care to bring too many of the Southern negroes to the Northern cities.

"We don't want too many of them here," he said. "We have no race problem in Rochester and we don't want to bring that problem here. It is quite true that climate has much to do with keeping them in the South, but that is not the only factor."

Mr. Jones is a member of a "steering committee" representing three African Methodist Episcopal churches in the United States. This committee keeps a watch upon the movement of negro migration. It is interested in a project to get negroes to settle with their families on government land in the Northwest, go in for farming and establish themselves permanently.

"When they come up in the late fall, we are apprehensive," said the minister, "for then they face a cold Northern winter for the first time. You know, the black man is subject to tuberculosis, and some of them die. However, we educate them as much as possible as to proper clothing and ventilation."